5X

383.9 Mil. Int. Report.

In reply please refer to No.______

Schuyler

PERSONAL AND ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

WAR DEPARTMENT
AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCES, SIBERIA.
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF STAFF
INTELLIGENCE SECTION

March 1, 1919.

My dear Colonel Barrows:

I have just received yo r letter of January 29th, forwarded by Baron Hoven of General Romanovsky's staff, who has just arrived in Omsk. I was of course much interested in your news, as I had been unable to find anything about the movements of our officers or as to myself.

I was afraid that I should be stranded in Omsk for some little time even if the others got away and although I want to get Home just a as soon as possible for urgent personal business reasons, I realize that I am o more use here than possibly anywhere else. This work, however, is so familiar to me as this is the fifth revolution I have watched in the pains of birth, that I must confess it has lost its charm of novelty.

I have not attempted to write you anything concerning the situation in Omsk as I have felt that conditions here were so fluid that what I wrote would be valueless when received by you. Lieutenant Cushing is preparing a sort of weekly report which he will send in in his own name and which will suffice for us both for the present. My telegrams have been perhaps more numerous than you desired and some of the subjects mentioned may not interest our expedition in the least. This I was aware of when sending them but I felt it was better to err on the side of fullness than the other way. I am strictly obeying my orders to keep out of local affairs and avoid giving advice, but I must say it is very hard not to jumpin and manage this government entirely.

The problems which the Omsk Government has to fa e are not at all intrinsically different from those which prevail in every movement of the kind known to history, but the besetting problem in this instance is that Admiral Kolchak has to work with the materials available for his purposes, namely the Russian people of today, who are so thoroughly disorganized and lifeless as a result of the last three years, that that they are unable even to think for themselves far less to govern themselves.

In the first place, the coup of Admiral Kolchak's friends whereby he ssumed the role of Supreme Governor was absolutely necessary if the whole of Siberia was not to fall ripe into the hands of the Bolsheviks. That visionary set of impractical theorists with whom I spent an e enig in a railroad car at a Manchurian station- Messrs A ksentieff and compa any- were far worse than out and out anarchists, for they were weak dreamers who could not even maintain the ordinary police security necessary to life in any community. Crime was rife in the streets of Omsk murders and hold ups were of nightly occurrence in this city on the main streets and the Bolshevik city governments throughout Siberia were running things their own way just as they are in Vladivostok today.

It is of course difficult to legalize Admiral Kolchak's position, in fact it is impossible, for while it was done by the decree of the so called government of the time, it was simply a coup d'etat. His status however is as good according to Russian law as that of any of th re olutionary governments which preceded him.

In the beginning and of necessity his acts for the restoration of order were autocratic; he depended on the support of the army and the officers especially, and he put down local disorder with a high hand.

X201 Schuyler X201 Barrows

In reply please
refer to No.________

WAR DEPARTMENT
AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCES, SIBERIA.
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF STAFF
INTELLIGENCE SECTION

Ever since then however, he has shown himself in so far as he could safely do so, more and more liberal, and I have no hesitation in saying that I firmly believe that his own opinions and frame of mind are far more liberal than the outside world gives him credit for. He is unfortunate in this that he has had to dpend upon the mailed fist to maintain his position and to keep his government from being overridn by the Bolshevik elements which are numerous in every city in Siberia.

It is probably unwise to say this loudly in the United States but the Bolshevik movement is and has been since its beginning guided and controlled by Russian Jews of the greasiest type, who have been in the United States and there absorbed every one of the worst phases of our civilization without having the least understanding of what we really mean by liberty (I do not mean the use of the word liberty which has been so widespread in the United States since the war began, but the real word spelt the same way), and the real Russian realizes this and suspects that Americans think as do the loathsome specimens with whom he now comes in contact. I have heard all sorts of estimates as to the real proportion of Bolsheviks to that of the population of Siberia and I think the most accurate is that of General Ivanov-Rinov who estimates it as two per cent. There is hardly a peasant this side of the Urals who has the slightest interest in the Bolshevik or his doings except in so far as it concerns the loss of his own property and, in fact, his point of view is very much like that of our own respectable farmers, when confronted with the IWW ideal.

Unfortunately, a few of our people in the United States, especially those with good lungs, seem to think that the Bolsheviks are as deserving of a hearing as any real political party with us. This is what the Russian cannot undertsand and I must say that without being thought one sided, I should not hesitate to shoot without trial if I had the power any persons who admitted for one moment that they were Bolsheviks. I would j st as soon see a mad dog running about a lot of children.

You will think I am hot about this matter but it is I feel sure, one which is going to bring great trouble on the United States when the judgment of history s all be recorded on the part we have played It is very largely our fault that Bolshevism has spread as it has and I do not believe we will be found guiltless of the thousands of lives uselessly and cruelly sacrificed in wild orgies of bloodshed to establish and autocratic and despotic rule of principles which have been rejected by every generation of mankind which has dabbled with them.

There have been times during the past month when I have been afraid that the Kolchak government would not last until the next mornng I have had I suppose, the closest connection with the leaders here of any foreigner in Omsk and my sources of information are so many and so varied that I am pretty sure to hear the different points of view on every imaginable question. The announcement of the Princes' Island conference with Bolsehviks came as a clap of thunder to the government, in fact it so took the wind out of their sails, that I believe they wol would have thrown up the government and run away if it had not been for

In reply please refer to No.________

WAR DEPARTMENT
AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCES, SIBERIA.
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF STAFF
INTELLIGENCE SECTION

timely and cool headed advice which they received. When the news became more widely known there was a fairly strong reactionary movement started by Cossack officers and adherents of the old regime. This was discovered and allowed to die a natural death with very good results. With the failure of the Princes Island conference, the government began to get back a little of the strength it had lost and today I believe it will hold on for some time, provided it does not get another series of hard knocks from the Allies or the United States.

The very clever and most unscrupulous Japanese propaganda which has been carried on here is one of the most interesting I have ever seen carried out by that country. The way the Japanese took over Korea and we made a scrap of paper of our solemn treaty with that poor little miserable people was child's play to the present methods of procedure in regard to ~~Kxx~~ Siberia. Admiral Kolchak hates the Japanese the latter naturally are not unaware of that feeling and cordially reciprocate it and the combination of their propaganda with that of the Bolsheviks in the United States and elsewhere is very powerful. I can understand how people who know nothing of our foreign relations or of the Russian people can be carried off their feet by it but how responsible men can listen to it I do not know. If the feelings of the Russian people are to be consulted and the future of their own country is to be in their hands there will be no Bolshevik future for this land. They have submitted to it first, from the very good reason that they did not know how to go about fighting it and second, because it came at the psychological moment when the morale of the people had been so shaken that they were ready to endure anything in order to be allowed to be let alone.

The scheme now being worked out for a popular assembly for all parts of Siberia will, I am sure, be of service and even if only partially successful- and I do not see at present how it can be more-will do much towards proving the sincerity of Kolchak in his promises.

Please do not get the idea that I am enthusiastically in favor of the present government, that I consider it ideal or even good, for it is not; but I do consider that it has already united more varied and more numerous elements of the Russian people than any other government which might take its place would do. The question of the moment is not an ideal government but one that will last for the next few weeks and will restore order enough so that any elections may have a fair chance of being carried out without force and fraud and graft.

Personally, I am fairly comfortable here; Cushing and I have each a room requisitioned by the government and it will be impossible to carry out the recommendations made by the Adjutant in a recent telegram because there are no rooms to be had and we have had applications for two months already. With kind regards to all friends,

I am, Very sincerely yours,

Montgomery Schuyler
Captain, U.S.A.

Lt. Col. Barrows,

Vladivostok.